THE CONFLICT IN CONSCIENCE OF A Dear Christian,

Named,

Bessie Clerkson.

In the Parish of *Lanerk*, which she lay under, three years and an half.

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The Conflict of Conscience of a dear Christian named Bessie Clerkson, in the Parish of Lanerk, which she lay under three years and an half.

MINISTER.

BEssie, how are you?

Bessie. I find the wrath of an angry God, of a crabbed God, and all the Wrath you preached is come upon me now: I find him dayly coming against me.

M. Bessie, God will for good ends let his own dear Children taste of his anger, and wrestle with his Wrath in this world, that they be not casten up in a dead sleep of fleshly security, and so perish with the wicked of the world, in that great wrath that is to be revealed, and to bring them to a hatred of sin, and sorrow for it; and to teach them how far they are obliged to the Son of God, who hath for them undergone the full weight of that Wrath (for your trouble is but a spark of that fire wherewith Christ was burnt up in a Sacrifice to the Father) and that our heart being racked with terror, we may be made for the greater peace, and the calm after the tempest may be the sweeter when it comes, and Gods glory the greater, and more manifest in that dealing and casten down, and plunging in the hell, and heaving again to the heaven: and this sort of dealing drives Atheism best out of the heart.

B. I am not a devil to contemn God, and I cannot get faith to believe in God.

M. It is a degree of faith, to find the want of faith: It is a step of greater growth.

When I was about to comfort her, she said, Will ye speak to me as ye should, and say, Thou wretched sinful and wicked woman: and not tell me sweet words.

I answered her, No, Bessie, I must not measure

sure you as you do your self, by your own sense; but to teach you to hope above hope, and say with Job, Lord, if thou wilt slay me, yet will I trust in thee.

B. O there was grace there; but there is a great dissention betwixt God and me: I am cast away. O that this wakening had come twenty years since! but now my time is lost. Many comes to the Word and Sacrament, that knows not what they are doing. The morn when Gods people come to hear you, I cannot come; I am cast aside.

M. It is yet the acceptable time, wherein the Lord may be found, he is yet upon the throne of grace: Give no place to such suggestions of satan, and distrustful cogitations, arising of your corruptions: and where you cannot come to the Word, that is not to be laid to your charge. It is not an argument of Gods anger, when one by sickness or trouble is withholden, who would fain be there; but seek you by prayer to God who by his spirit will teach you inwardly, and supply the want of the means by an inward working.

When I pressed to perswade her, that God in his own time would cast her, I cannot find that, said she.

M. Albeit ye feel it not, pray that the Lord would Remember mercy with Truth as the Prophet Hab. 3. 5. Mercy in wrath, said she; O that is a strange word! O for absolution! O for a drop to cool my tormented soul! O that I could win a step nearer him.

M. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst, for they shall be satisfied. It is the Lord who is our sufficiency, who works the will and the deed: It is he who wakens those desires in you, and he will work the work.

When I had said, the Lord dealt with her as he doth, to humble her. To humble me, said she,

and that I am: the cat that sits there, is in better case then I am. I shall beat down the carcass with beer-bread and water: but that doth not the turn. When her servant woman said, you are a good Body, and began to commend her. Cease said she, I am but a dog, and worse then a dog: Gods wrath is on me for my invisible sins. And if I were away, there would be none but Christians on the earth. I know Christ would go betwixt me and all my sins, but one: I will not lain it, nor hide it; it is despair.

M. You are very sensible of your unbelief, and God will make you also sensible of a lively faith, ere all be done. For a little while hath he forsaken you, as he saith, Isa. 54. 7, 8, 9, 10. But with great compassion will he gather you. For a moment in his anger hath he hid his face from you, for a little season: But with everlasting mercy will he have compassion on you. And 10. 11. O thou afflicted and tossed with tempest;

B. Is it God that doth this to me? Can God spoil himself? I had faith and prayer, now they are reft, cut and spoiled. Can God do it? Will God rob himself? will he take away the matter of his own glory? I am ashamed to look any man in the face. I have lost the favour of God and man. O for a drop of grace; O for as much faith as a grain of mustard seed;

M. It is the Lord that deals with you, but not to rob your faith, which is his gift, and once given, cometh never under provocation. Yet it continueth not ay in a like vigour and strength, but will oft come under a great eclipse, and be handled with doubtings, and shaken with fears. for there is no perfection here: and all this exercise is to add strength, that the wrestling with God, as Jacob did, may prevail in end: and that is not lost, your earnest desire evidently declareth. And when I shew her, that we walked by faith,

and

and not by feeling, and must not measure our selves, nor Gods goodness and love by our sense. She answereth, if faith doth it not, I have done with it. When one beside spake to her of Gods favor & presence, she said, God, if I wer as sure of it as you are. I have, said she, hands, feet, eyes, knees, I can do any thing but one, I cannot believe: Well were the soul that ever it was ordained that had faith. O the great want of faith and love to God in these days: It was never less, and they will find one day what it is to want it. One thing holds me from God, it is unbelief, Gods hand is sore on me, I would fain believe. Pray, pray, pray, (said she) ye that have faith.

M. The Lord who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, will bring your desire, and their weak beginnings to a greater growth and perfection, for faith groweth by degrees, as that blind mans sight, Mark 8. 24, 25.

When I told her of Gods dealing with his own by divers sorts of trouble in mind, body, and estate, she answereth, no trouble to the trouble in mind. I care not (said she) for legs, arms, eyes, and all the rest, if I could get comfort in the blood of Jesus. I would not care my Carcass lay lame, leper, sick, sore, so that my mind were pacified, and at one with God. I care not for all Satans assaults, if he were even standing there, so that I could find God with me and not against me. Wait on, said I, the Lord will come. She answereth, he cometh daily in wrath. But he will come in mercy, said I, in his own time. She answereth, ever since this bred in me, you said that but I can never find it: I would willingly lose my soul, if I could get faith. Well is the Soul that ever it was ordained of God, that gets the comfort of the holy Ghost!

M. Would you not, Welsie, be one of his? Wally, Wally, said she, to be one of his, to have

one

one drop of grace from his finger-end. Sir, would not be one of his? Then said I, blessed are ye: for blessed are they that hunger and thirst for Righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are they that seek in sincerity to be one of that society of the Saints of God: To have the comfort of that communion and privilege of his people: For blessed Ps. 33. 12. are these people whose God is the Lord, even the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. And after I had prayed for her, and pressed by some passages of scripture to comfort her, she said it is heavy to my heart those admonitions and prayers, and to get no part of them in my soul, and not to find him whom you seek.

She saith again, whether shall I turn? whither shall I go? what shall I do? whether shall I run to seek God to grip him? I cannot get grips fastned on him, Dear Minister (said she) tell me why sin hath procured this, that I am such a spectacle to the world by all others? heard you, read you, knew ye ever one like me? then I shew her of Job, Jeremie, David, Hezekiah and others. And albeit Beloved, to your feeling ye cannot get grips fastned on him, yet assuredly he hath grips fastned on you. The good sheepherd hath you in his hand, and none shall pluck you out of it.

B. I think, if ever I had faith, I could not have lost it.

Min. Your desire which God reputes for faith, hath the same promise of satisfaction which faith hath made unto it.

She answereth, I would be burnt quick to be sure of salvation. I live without faith. I live and worship not God. I can find no comfort from God nor man: my life is miserable and comfortless. That is even Jobs complaint, said I, Job 3. 20, 21. So albeit ye be comfortless to your

sense,

sense, yet you are not marrowless, and hath the Saints subject to the same tentation and tribulation with you; And ye shall get in the Lords mercy a blessed out-gate with them: yea although we be never witness to it, yet you your self shall feel it.

B. I am the most miserable and wretched creature in the world, for my sins are hid to my self, and known to God.

M. Welsie, God is not ay pursuing sin, when the souls of his Saints are perplexed and pursued with horrours: He seeth no iniquity in Jacob, nor sin in Israel: albeit it setteth us to seek them out, and to sorrow for them: he hath other ends wherefore he dealeth with his own, namely that he may shew his work, and glorifie his name, as Christ saith of the blind man, John 9. 3. After I had prayed, said she, if your prayers have a good ground, and be according to Gods will, it is the better, it will be the better heard. But that is, said I, I have a warrand to mourn: and to pity and pray for all that are in trouble, chiefly of my own flock. Your warrand were the better, said she, if I were one of Christs flock. Happy is that Soul that is one of those, but ye are one of those, said I. Ye have ay said that, said she: but I can never find it. You will find it, said I, in the Lords time: tarry his leasure, it will come with comfort. Tarry must I, said she, where shall I flee or flit? he cometh ay in due time, but he cometh to me in wrath. When I remembred her of Job, who said, If thou wilt slay me, yet will I trust in thee. She answereth, where will ye get the like of Job. No, not among you all that are Ministers. Faithful was he, but I have none: no salvation for me. Then to try her, I said, will you sell me your part of it, your right and kindness? what shall I give you for it? If you have none, you may the better cheap quite it, and

I

I will give you. She answereth, why scorn ye me a silly poor woman, and ye a wise man. I would buy and not sell. If I had ten thousand millions of gold, if I had a thousand worlds, it were to be bought for money, I would give you all for it.

M. I said not this to scorn you, Belsie, but to draw out your desire by this demand as it doth whereby it is easie to discern, that ye have a sure tittle to that salvation, although it seem tint to your self.

B. I have no pleasure in any thing, neither in husband, nor child: I can do nothing but sin, my life is all sin: and it were to peal the bark off a cale castock and eat: I sin in the doing of it: why live I then. I cannot die, said she: I cannot live: they bury a carcass: will they bury me a carcass of sin, yea sin it self.

When I asked at her, if she desired mercy, she answered, O that his desire to me were as great as mine to him! O for a look of love! Cry, and pray, said I, for the Lord hath said, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you. My prayer, said she, is repelled, my cry is not respected: it doth no good, I cannot have faith except God give it; None have any grace, but from him: Happy are they that can bless him and call upon his name.

M. And happy are they, Belsie, that count them happy, and would with all their heart be of that number as ye would.

B. That stone in the wall hath as great appetit to any bodily comfort of meat, drink, clothes, or such like, as I have: I cannot get the comforts of the holy Spirit.

When I prayed for that consolation to her, that solid comfort which is stronger then tentation or tribulation or death it self she said; why ware ye your prayers on such a vile wretch? God hath

counted

counted the number, and gathered them, and I am one mor. I will not believe you, said I. Belsie, albeit ye believe the suggestions of Satan in your false heart, it is otherwise in the account of God: And I will pray for you, that it may be revealed to you, and pray you with me. And after I had prayed, she said, sayings will not do it, you do your part, but if God work not, and he give it not, I cannot have comfort. Can any have grace till God give it? Can that stone believe? Yet, Belsie, said I, let us use the means, and do according to Gods direction in his word, and wait on till he who hath wounded heal again, and he will make light arise in the mind of your darkness, the lights of consolation in the darkness of perturbation, and calm the tempest that is in your conscience.

B. There is no friend to that soul that is under Gods feet; I am under Gods feet; and my husband, children, nor any other, are friends to me: nay, not my own self is a friend to my self: as for my corps, I care not it were cast up to the heaven, and kepped upon iron graps so my soul had peace.

M. Bessie, many have peace with themselves that have none with God, as secure sinners sleeping in sin, and crying peace; and some have peace with God that have none with themselves: and as many have not the grace and faith, which they think they have, so some have the grace and faith, which they think they have not.

B. I care not for mine own damnation, if God be glorified: what reck of me if he gets his own glory.

M. Bessie, Assure your self these are not the wishes and words of a cast-away, and Gods glory be dear to you, you and your salvation are dear to him.

When I asked if she took meat to refresh her

body

body? she answered, No, all craves that, be
faithful and unfaithful, albeit the unfaithful
unworthie of it, for they cannot glorifie that G
that gives it.

When I desired her to pray, she answered, That
no warrand & have many lets, Will you say, la
I God be merciful to me, for Jesus sake: the sam
God be merciful to me for thy own sake, for Chri
hath not redeemed all. Bessie said I, ye must se
in the Name of Jesus whom the Father hat
sealed, in whom alone he is reconciled with us
and for whose sake he giveth grace and mercie
lay your compt, you will never come to the Fathe
but by him.

M. B. Do ye not pray when ye are alone: Sh
answered, I will not commend my self. When on
parting with her, said, God be with you. Bessi
She answered, God forbid he were with you,
he is with me. O there is a great change comin
a fearful alteration, a cup of wrath coming, b
are conceived and born in sin, and what shall b
the end of sin?

M. Indeed, Bessie, sin hath fearful effects
but blessed be the Son of God Jesus, who save
his people from their sin. There is no condem
nation to them that are in Christ.

B. I know if the devil were chained there b
sides me, he cannot, without Gods permission
hurt an hair of mine head, but God being angr
with me, he turns him loose, and all his Instru
ments against me.

M. Bessie, the Lord looked him upon Job, but
many links only, that he wan to his goods, chi
dren, body, but not his life, far less to his soul
The Lord will not give the soul of his turtle
the beast, the good shepherd hath you in his hand
and none shall pluck you out of it. What ever
your fears, doubtings, or apprehensions und
your trial, and present desertion.

When some standing by spake to her, she says, tak

take all that to your self that you say to me, ye have no borrows, no assurance more nor I, and knows not but ye come in the like case.

M. Indeed we should take our warning by you, and we have all matter to gather and lay up against the hour of Temptation. I coming to her saith, Bessie, have ye gotten any comfort yet? She answered, when God sends it, I will get it.

But seek ye it not, said I: she answereth, What availeth words, when there is nothing within? When I was blessing the Lord, she doubled the word, and said, Blessed be he, blessed be he. O that I could glorifie, O that I could get grips fastned on him. I see, Bessie, said I, albeit you pray not, yet you praise and bless God. I cannot said she, bless him, he is blessed in himself, and I never heard him blasphemed, but I was grieved at it, I had rather have heard the evil spirit named ten times then him once blasphemed. Fy on them that cannot bless, and yet will blaspheme him.

When I earnestly prayed for her, she said, why take ye pains on such a vile wretched creature? I would, Bessie, said I, have God glorifying himself in a lost soul, and magnifying his mercy on you who is miserable. I, said she, that is right good, God grant it, God grant it. O there is little faith in the earth and love is grown cold!

When I desired her to pray, and said, long since, Bessie, ye would have prayed, why insist ye not? She answered, I had the will of prayer, but who hath the spirit of prayer, God knows well is the soul that is in Christ: but they that are founded on that old Father Adam, fearful is their estate.

When I was poling her with some questions about her inward estate, she said, Why examin ye me so long, ye use sharp examination, and yet ye will not be my judge. Bessie said I, I would know your constitution, that I may the better know how to deal with you: I am about to in-

struct

struct and comfort you, to use the means, and b
a blessing from God upon them; and I ha
seen when ye were better content that I confer
with you, and prayed for you. She answered,
is a token that I get small comfort by them. T
Lord said I, Bessie, hath that to give, he hath
concredited the dispensation of a dram weight
grace to man or angel, he keepeth that in his o
hand, and dispenses when, and to whom, and af
what measure and manner he pleases. But I
the devil in your corruption; is not content t
means be used. She answered, I find the devil,
world and the flesh fighting against me: I fe
both Satans assaults, and ly under Gods wra
also, which is a fearful case: what reck of all
tans assaults, if I lay not under Gods wrath.

M. The greater battel, Bessie, the great
victorie: I see great conflict in you, & you your
finds it, as you confess: yet happy are ye who a
pursued by Satan, and not possest by him, and u
der peace with him. The Lord hath divided
twixt you and him, and drawn you to that si
whereon the seed of the woman is: I find fa
fighting in you against unbelief, and where fa
and unbelief are in one soul fighting, faith sh
ever prevail. By faith is our victory, 1 Joh. 5.
And what is the condition of the Christian ev
after his calling but to feel his troublesome co
flict between nature and grace, spirit and flesh
the old man and the new? But blessed be G
who shall tread Satan under feet: so albeit th
battle be burdensome, yet let this bear you u
that the Lord in end shal give you the victory ov
all your enemies. It were, said she, a great co
fort to me if I were perswaded of it: but I ca
not be quite of infidelity and despair. Well
the soul that ever it came into the world, that c
be freed of unbelief, and grace to believe. Lor
banish the devil, and I shall believe. And lon
gentlem

gentlemen and others being with me, she directs
er speech to them, saying; Ye gentlemen and
mple, and all, let my calling back be your for-
ard coming. Well are ye that can believe and
ay; but I have none. I have no wit in the
orld, either to bless God, or to bene fit my self.
any thousands get grace and faith, & I would
s fain have it as any of them.

M. Bessie, God measureth his own by their
nfained desire; and what you would be in an
arty affection, that ye are in the compt of God:
d that secret seed of grace, which in this erre-
le under the ashes of your corruption lyeth hid,
d dead as it were, like seed in the ground, or
t coals under ashes shall hereafter in the mer-
of God bud and break forth; for it may be dis-
rned already in these divine desires in your esti-
ation of the blessedness of those ỳ believe, and
fection to be one of that number. Bessie, is ther
y comfort come yet? She answereth, if it were
me, it would kyth, it would bud forth. Oft and
any a time have you said comfort was a coming,
t I cannot find it. Alace! I am an out-law to
od; I weep in the night when I should sleep; I
ourn when others are merry, I am bound when
ey are free; I have a longsome lair, a fearful
d sore lair here, when others go up and down,
and fro: I am a wonder to the world, and I
m worthy to be so.

M. Bessie, long delay is not an argument of
ter denyal; and when ye mourn, when others
e merry, it is better to go to the house of mour-
ng then of feasting. Blessed are they that mourn
faith Christ) but wo to them that laugh. We
e here in the valley of tears, and Kingdom
patience. The Lord will wipe the tears from
ur eyes; he is leading you by hell to Heaven,
d through many tribulations and afflictions to
s Kingdom, peace shall be the end of your bat-

tels

tels, and rest the end of your trouble. Wife ha
Beside, brought you a drink of wine to com
your spirit. Wine (said she) the worst water
the well is over good for me. I will have no wi
why should I have the benefit when it is neith
blessed to me, neither can I bless him that gi
it? I care not for outward bodily comforts, li
I cannot get the inward and spiritual. Will
seek it of God, (Bessie) in the name of Jes
Lord, if thou wilt (said she) the Lord hath po
er enough: but not finding faith in Jesus,
said, she wanted a warrand to seek it in his nam
I will show you a warrand (Bessie) his o
command with a promise, Ps. 50. 15. In the d
of thy trouble. &c. 1 Joh. 2. 23. This is his co
mandment, that we believe, &c. Also he call
Mat. 11. on the weary and laden, promising
ease them; you cannot deny but you are b
weary and laden under the load, therefore you a
called on: & the more miserable you are you ar
meeter object for mercy to work on, Will ye
from the Savior, because you are lost? or fr
the Physician, because you are sick? Alace (s
she) I cannot find a warrand, I find a wro
warrand. What call you a wrong warrand s
I? I cannot find Christ (said she) and a
thing beside him is wrong.

M. But say, Jesus intercede for me. I will
blaspheme him (said she) nor be a liar: I a
a liar great enough already: for to me to spe
the words in my mouth without faith in my hea
what is that but to take his name in vain?

M. Shal I pray for you, Bessie? What g
(said she) can I get by your prayers except I h
a heart to pray my self. I have many things
seek if I could get faith to believe, and relief
my spirit, and what matter of saws then? Wh
I see that I saw not, then shal I do that I d
not. These three years I had not a faithful

e: indeed I thought it came all from your own
outh, all the inlack of my prayers.
M. How so Betsie? what heard you me say?
hat prayer availed not said she. M. I have oft
mplained of our Prayers as I had just cause,
o that God might be angry against them, Mal.
. 9. And might expell them, if he dealt in rus-
e with us: But this was not to make us
ve off prayer, but to repent, and pray more
ourtly. But the time hath been when you de-
hted in prayer, said I. She answered, I
and comfort then in prayer, I had no com-
t but in prayer: I had many calamities,
o whom to should I seek but to God? And
went I to him with a grieved heart: had I
d, what reck of all the world? what reck who
against them, if he be with them? But if a
l be under Gods feet, what availeth friends,
, jewels, and all the world? Oh, and alace
ever, that I should want that blessing and
our that he bestowes on so many! alace, I have
ten ỳ poor mans answer you will not be served
M. Take not that answer, Betsie, continue
ing and knocking, for he hath said, seek, and
shall find. And to the poor woman of Canaan,
t would not take a repulse or nay-say, was sa-
ied in end. But I am none of this side, said
, Betsie, said I, who told you that? the devil
uld have you think so: and will you take his
imony against you, who is a liar from the be-
ning, and not the witness of the verity and
d of God with you? Believe not satan, nor
r own false heart: I know God in his own
e will give you comfort.
s The knowledge is yours, said she, but the
row is mine. Well is the soul that getteth the
y spirit to seek grace and mercy at his hands.
ell is ỳ soul that getteth the benefit & blessing
t: but fie on them that counts the fore afore the

glory,

ry, the fore of the earth before the glory of heaven
It is no fore to them, but a fearful curse. Alas
I have long to live, and a wretched life: I wea
up, and I weary down, sighs help not, sobs he
not, groans help not, and prayer is faint. It is
fearful calamity to have two here and two hereafte
to have hell here, and hell hereafter for ever. T
matter is the less, they that get a light life and
lightsome life, that many have. But it is m
woful and doleful to have two here and two here
ter for ever. I will tell you my testament, I ha
been in hell these many years, and I look ne
for another heaven. O wretch that I am! ala
for ever, there is a great fire coming, a fear
cup, and I will get my share of it: and it is
thing I feel here, to that I feel for ever.

M. Belsie, the Lord corrects you here, th
you perish not with the world for ever. He wou
deth, and he will heal again, albeit you can n
ther think it, nor feel it, nor hope for it; yet
his name I will assure you, in his own time,
will ease you, and speak peace to you, I cann
(said she) find you a good pay-man.

M. Yet if ever, Belsie, I speak true, you w
find it: I promise you in the name of the Lo
she answered, the Lords Lieutenant will be loa
to lie, well is his Lieutenant. Whom call yo
said I, his Lieutenant? you, said she, and su
as you; Ye are tennants, and not master
Belsie, grip to the promise of mercy, hope abo
hope. I have not, said she, that gift of my se
if God give it me not. Seek it of God, said
What reck of words, said she, since I cannot g
mends to my inward parts: I am sure, said
if you should go to hell, Belsie, you would go
hell with love to God. She answered, what re
of my love to him, since he hath none to me:
he had love to me, all were well. But he love
you, Belsie, before you loved him, for your lo

is the effect of his, and they whom he loveth can never perish. His own, said she, shall never perish. But ye are one of those, Belsie, and hath right to the promise. She answered, how shall I believe you who believes not him who hath all power and is truth it self? I would fain seek God, But I feel my stops and lets, and my prayers are stung back. If any had but four and twenty hours, yea a touch of that, under which I have lyen these three years, they would think their case fearfull, and would give a world (if they had it) for a blink of his reconciled face. But my Calamity will make others run and cry for mercy, my grief and displeasure is your joy and gladness. How so, Belsie, we take no pleasure in your grief. She answered, A Christian that is sealed, seeing me, will flee to mercy as a bird, but I want wings. After I had prayed for her, she said, if God would give me a heart to give you thanks for your good prayers, I would give it. And if I had a motion in the right way of salvation, O as I should run and flee to him like a bird! God be blessed, said I, I see some fore-running token of his coming with comfort. She answered, they are but sober and smal tokens. Your words (said I) smell sometimes of the spirit of grace and faith, and sometimes of the flesh, infidelity and infirmity; for the prayers of the Saints are oft like a fire, which at the first hath smoke and reek, without light or heat, but breaketh out ere all be done into a clear light and comfortable heat; As may be seen in sundry of Davids Psalms, where he begins with heavy plaints, and endeth in heavenly praises and prayers ere all be done.

At another time I asked, if any comfort was yet come? she answered, dolor was come, but no comfort. You are troubled with me in pulpit, and out in pulpit, and in coming unto me day after day; will you make you quite of this cumber. Belsie, said I, I think no cumber of it, it

M. He shakes you (Bessie) to make you su
if it were so (said she) I would seek to him
Tentation (said I) dings you from that you
sire, and you are greatly wounded in your spi
nal battel: but what reck of a wound to hi
getteth the victory, you will in the Lords me
get the victory, what reck of your wounds th
And we will sit down on our knees, and crav
to you of God in the name of Jesus. After I
prayed (she saith) God, for thy beloved son Je
sake, see to my mister, succour me. Now ye
witness to that, that ye would have had that
seek in Jesus Name. Blessed be God, for it is sa
Seek on & I will pledge my soul for yours, t
ye shall be safe. Seek must I (said she) and i
will I though he should ding me back to the b
tom of the sea: and charge the whole family th
they do the like as you do to me: for come we
come wo, they will get a share of it: I will (s
I) for they ought to concur with you.

The next time that I visited her, and dema
ded how she did? She answered, the life of t
body is not like to go out, and comfort is not li
to come into the soul. Yet wait, Bessie, in ho
and give not over, it will come. I know (s
she) your tales and tidings, but cannot find th
true: Alace, that ever I came into the wo
I am not booked, I am not baptized I am n
written in the book of life, I am not baptised
the right baptism. I cannot find the fruit of

M. Bessie, said I, I am sorry that I fi
you not as I left you. Continued you not calli
on God in Christs name, as you promised?
answered, I was the worse of the words that y
caused me to say; I am ever since, a thousa
times more troubled then before. Bessie, the wo
have not the wite, it is Satan that rageth bef
he be cast out; & your trouble ẏ nearer the hig
the nearer is the delivery: And although yo
physick be bitter, yet it will have good effect.

trouble is so joyous or pleasant for the present, &c. Heb. 12. The Lord who will not let the hand of the wicked ly long upon the back of the righteous, Psal. 125.3. Will not let his own hand, which is heavier then the hand of the wicked, ly long, he will send the issue with the tentation, 1 Cor. 10. 13. Wherefore hearken not, Bessie, to satans suggestions, that your heart be not bound up that you pray not. That is (said she) a true tale, satan binds up my heart. But pray (said I) against it: Say the Lords prayer. I can (said she) say the words, but I have no warrand to pray it. I cannot call him Father: He is the Father of the faithful alone: but that priviledge of children is not given me: I cannot find a warrand that I am his: alace, that ever I was the cursed ground whereon the ill seed was sown. M. Bessie, the more miserable you find your self, the more meet are you to goto the Savior for mercy. I am not, said she, worthy that he give me any grace or mercy.

M. Bessie, none is worthy: and if he gave to the worthy, his glory and praise would be the less: but in this is his mercy magnified, that he manifesteth it on the miserable: and this is a fault in us, that we are ever seeking something in our selves which would derogat from the praise of his grace, as presumption and desperation are dangerous rocks that many run on: and this is a third, & as dangerous as any of them, and the rather, that it is not soon seen or taken up, we are ay seeking something in our selves that should commend us to God, as if we could not be saved, except we were perfect, as if our own innocency, & not Gods mercy in Christs merits, were ẏ warrand of our salvation.

B. I cannot speak the word can please you, no not them that came out of my bowels: how then can it please the Lord? Mine own hand and satan lets me not believe, and my unbelief draweth

down

and so will be seen on the whole swack.

After this, when I had read some comfo places to her, and prayed for her she cryed o doubled it oft, O blessed are they that ha spirit of prayer! O blessed are they.

NOw as for the end of this conflict, and of this dear daughter of Abraham, in 1625. I being at Glasgow at the Provinci semblie, the Lord called her home, she being ly extenuat and worn, what by heavie sickn her bodie, what by this longsome and fear er ise on her soul, death on a suddentie deal her heart, that her words and speech failed but in presence of diverse witnesses, her hand eyes were heaved to the heavens: and so g that sign of victorie, she rendred her spirit. although it pleased our gracious God, who great wisdom worketh after diverse sorts wi own, to let us hear out of her own mouth glorious victorie, and unspeakable joyes t had given her inwardlie in her soul: Yet sure there is none that is illuminate from a and taught to discern spiritually, that wi way doubt of her blessed deliverance, alb outward sign had been seen. Yea, it was a derful mercie, that God so long under suc rors held her own hand out of her self: wh last with her eyes she lifted up to the heavens her speech could not express her inward feeli an unspeakable joy, and victorious faith.

Only herein we have our warning to be t time, and to get oyl in our lamps, and not our selves with emptie Lamps, and with a show of an outward profession; but labor t a lively and effectual faith in this depth o souls: for conceit of opinion will seem suffi till we be put at, which will not do our tur stand us in stead in the fierie trial.

FINIS.